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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION: RENEWAL OF THE DIALOGUE ON STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

Letter dated 13 March 1998 from the Chairman of the Second Committee to the President of the General Assembly

With reference to your letter of 18 November 1997 (A/C.2/52/10) requesting me to undertake, on your behalf, consultations with Member States on the date, modalities and focus of the first two-day high-level dialogue on the theme of the social and economic impact of globalization and interdependence and their policy implications, I have the honour to report to you hereby the results of the consultations held this week.

With respect to the timing, taking into consideration that this event has already been postponed several times, delegations felt that the most appropriate time for the first high-level dialogue should be immediately before the commencement of the general debate at the fifty-third session of the General Assembly, that is, on 17 and 18 September 1998.

With regard to the desired modalities, delegations considered that, in order to stimulate high-level interest and ensure interactive dialogue, a combination of plenary meetings and ministerial round tables would be the best approach to follow.

Delegates also felt that, in order to stimulate the high-level interest in the meeting and to benefit from the widest possible range of inputs, contributions of non-State actors involved in, and affected by, globalization should be sought. Thus, the official intergovernmental dialogue could be complemented by informal panel meetings, with the participation of non-State actors, which would be held in conjunction with (but not as an official part of) the dialogue. In making such arrangements, it should be ensured that there is balanced representation.

Thus, on the first day there would be an opening plenary meeting, to be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., in which participation of the Secretary-General and spokesmen of the major groups, among others, would be expected. In the afternoon, the first informal panel meeting could be scheduled for the first part of the afternoon, from 2 to 4 p.m., followed by a continuation of the morning plenary meeting, from 4 to 7 p.m.

On the second day of the dialogue, a second informal panel meeting would be held from 9 to 11 a.m., followed by the first ministerial round table, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. In the afternoon, there would be a second ministerial round table between 3 and 5 p.m., followed by a closing plenary meeting, from 5 to 7 p.m.

At the closing plenary meeting, rapporteurs designated for each of the ministerial round tables would present their summary reports, and all minister participants would be expected to join in a final, interactive discussion. At the end, a President's summary would be issued.

The specific focus for the ministerial round tables and the informal panels should be selected later, based on further consultations, and drawn from both the economic and social aspects of the impact of globalization.

Delegations were of the view that arrangements for this dialogue were without prejudice to arrangements for subsequent dialogues, which would need to be reviewed and built upon based on the lessons learned in the present dialogue. In this context, more thorough preparatory processes and a "bottom-up" approach, inter alia, could be considered.

Delegations were confident that further organizational details of this high-level dialogue would be wisely and appropriately pursued by you, with the support of the Secretariat, after wide and continued consultation with Governments, so as to arrive at early decisions thereon. I and other members of the Second Committee remain at your service for anything further in which we may be of assistance.

I ask that you have this letter distributed as a document of the fifty-second session of the General Assembly in connection with agenda item 97 (a).

(Signed) Oscar R. de ROJAS
Ambassador
Deputy Permanent Representative of Venezuela
Chairman of the Second Committee